

House Bill 205
March 6, 2013
Presented by Jim Kropp
Senate Judiciary Committee

SENATE JUDICIARY
SUBMIT NO. 4
3/6/13
HB 205

Mr. Chairperson and committee members, I am Jim Kropp, Chief of Law Enforcement for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP). I am here today on behalf of the Director in opposition to House Bill 205.

For the third session in a row, legislation has come before you to repeal long-standing statutes restricting the use of silencers or suppressors. We understand that collectors and shooting enthusiasts wish to have the opportunity to use these accessories at ranges, for general target shooting or other casual activities. We attempted to negotiate with the sponsors of previous bills to allow such while still retaining the restriction on suppressors use for big game hunting. That proposal was rejected both times out of hand. With the current popularity of subsonic ammunition and the current legality of the use of such ammunition, many of the issues regarding hearing protection as well as silencer use are already being addressed through conventional means. We still believe that legally possessed silencers should be allowed for other shooting activities.

We do, however, contend that the prohibition on the use of silenced weapons for the purpose of hunting big game should remain in place. It is our contention that their use goes against the grain of Montana's hunting heritage, damages hunting's image among non-hunters and is an inappropriate and unnecessary accessory to utilize in the hunt. We oppose the bill in its current form.

Page 80

1. 10/1/1917

2. 10/2/1917

3. 10/3/1917